THE New Republic

A Return to Diplomacy
An Editorial

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JANUARY 20, 1958

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Washington Wire

Eight Goals Ahead

WE HEARD a debate in our office last week as to who should have title to the Moon—national discoverers or the United Nations? It was conducted simply and straightforwardly, without smirking apologies. Sensing history in the making, we noted the time: it was 11:16 a.m. January 9, 1958; outside — clear and cold.

Eisenhower made a good State of the Union speech last week but not a great speech. He was warmly applauded (40 times) by Congressmen who were (a) glad to see him so fit and well; (b) aching for leadership and (c) reacting to the American instinct to rally behind the President in time of crisis. The President strengthened his position by abandoning his previous posture that we are well ahead of Moscow in defense; he also showed an admirable and almost fierce support for foreign trade and aid. The speech had no new creative ideas. He offered eight goals with which nobody could disagree—but did not say how he would implement them. Aside from proving that the President is able to accomplish the physical feat of speaking vigorously for 44 minutes it did not greatly change the situation in Washington. Congress still has the ball.

The Times—Tempest Tossed

WE FIND the *New York Times* fascinating these days. There is evidence of deep psychic disturbance. Its first critical reaction to the Eisenhower speech Friday was that "what it most lacked was a sense of urgency and inspiration at a critical moment in American history." Hastily revising this the next day (Saturday), the *Times* declared mysteriously that "the Eight Points themselves provide the leadership for which both Congress and the country have been asking." Backing off still further on Sunday it continued editorially, "The President has risen to this grave turn in history." On Sunday also conservative *Times* pundit Arthur Krock obliquely chided the Friday editorial, declaring that any "comment" that the speech failed to convey adequate urgency "somewhat baffles this observer."

The *Times'* confusion is symptomatic. How shall these journals which sold us Eisenhower in 1952 and 1956 meet the new situation? This column is tired of reporting that the unfortunate President is weak and inadequate, but they must now accommodate themselves to the discovery. The truth blurts itself out.

Cricket in the Choir

FOR THE most part the *Times'* criticism of Eisenhower has been implicit in the polite but sometimes devastating *obiter dicta* of top rank reporters James Reston, C. L. Sulzberger and others, while its own editorials have been increasingly vapid and generalized. A justification for this ambiguity came in a challenging column by Reston himself, January 5. Eisenhower, he said, is the only President we've got; the "over-riding fact in Washington," he said accurately, "is that he must somehow govern for the next three years." Reasonable criticism is all right, Reston warned, but if we destroy the President we damage ourselves.

There is truth in this. It has made us examine our conscience. For five years we have blown our impudent penny whistle against the full press orchestra. Maybe few heard our strident note but it was there—like a cricket—between one swelling paean and the next. (Sometimes we thought they played noisily to drown out their secret doubts!) Now should we cease our shrilling because Eisenhower (and they) have got us into this jam?

Well, of course we can't. We can and will try not to over-compensate so much, simply because we are in a minority—a fault of which we know we are guilty. Yet we hope that 50 years hence if some historian turns over these shredded pages and finds us standing at an odd slant, he will appreciate the strength of the gale against which we tried to advance.

The George T. Smith Spirit

A YEAR AGO the President forecast a $1.5 billion surplus for the fiscal year ending next July. Now he revises this to a $400 million deficit. It will probably be bigger. He still estimates a surplus for a year after that. Nobody takes this prediction very seriously either. Let's be kind to Eisenhower and say that no President can look ahead 18 months and tell how his budget will come out. What really counts is how much unction and hypocrisy there is in the presentation. We find the content still high but substantially less than last year.

The really sad thing is the way education has been cut. In spite of the peril created by the Soviet educational challange the Administration has actually reduced its total request from $740 million last year to $474 million this year, a decline of more than a quarter billion dollars.

A humble Negro named George T. Smith confessed here last week that he had gone out, with a hired assistant, and painted the Harrison elementary school on his own initiative and without thought of competition. He had worried so much about the school that it threatened him with ulcers. There seems little of the George T. Smith spirit in the budget.

We heard Secretary Weeks last week calmly tell a committee that the big Federal super-highway program would cost an extra $10 billion or $37.6 billion all told. Everybody seemed to take it quite casually. Schools lost out to autos some time back.

Notes

THE ADMINISTRATION has suppressed "for policy reasons" an article for the *Reader's Digest* pointing up the nation's military peril, reports well-informed Brig. Gen. Thomas R. Phillips (ret.) to the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*; its conclusions "were even more disturbing than those of the Gaither Report." . . . Nelson Rockefeller tells us his group is bringing out a report on the nation's economic situation in about a month: it should be lively. Rockefeller would make a good GOP Presidential candidate. . . . Public-spirited GOP industrialists Paul Hoffman and Eric Johnston are the latest to rally behind Eisenhower in the movement of so-called "Eastern internationalists" to try to supply leadership.

T.R.B.

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The New Republic
A JOURNAL OF OPINION

1244 NINETEENTH ST., N.W.
WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

VOL. 138, NO. 3, ISSUE 2253
JANUARY 20, 1958

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Published weekly (except for omission of four summer issues) and copyrighted, 1958 in the USA by The New Republic, Inc., and distributed to newsstands by the Eastern News Company, N.Y. 14, N.Y. Phone: REpublic 7-8656. Entered as second-class matter September 26, 1950, at the post office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Single copy, 25¢; Yearly subscription, $8.00; Foreign, $9.00, Armed Forces personnel or students, $5.00. Subscribers desiring change of address should **notify us at least three weeks in advance. Please** include both old and new addresses.

Correspondence

► *Ice Cream for Breakfast*

SIRS:

MAY I congratulate you upon publishing the article by Benjamin Higgins on "Indonesia, the Dutch and US Policy"? (*NR*, Dec. 30) Just as I was getting fed up with the perennial *NR* doom-and-gloom articles of fantasy by Morgenthau, Schuman, Kennan and

(Continued on page 23)

A Return to Diplomacy

WHEN, if ever, we have often asked, will the President give some indication that he is fully aware of *both* our military and our diplomatic national inadequacies? That indication has, at long last, come. The strengthening of our national defense was discussed by Mr. Eisenhower in his State of the Union message, and we comment upon that in our editorial note which follows. His response to the Soviet diplomatic offensive came in his reply on January 12 to recent letters from Premier Bulganin. Where Mr. Eisenhower's remarks on peace in his declaration before Congress were anemic, his proposals to Bulganin—made three days later—were robust. The President's reply is, in our opinion, one of the most convincing and constructive diplomatic statements in many a year. The tone is dignified but not cold, friendly but without pretense of affection, firm in its rejection of impossible Soviet claims yet reasonable and restrained almost beyond belief. (To illustrate: "I am compelled to conclude after the most careful study of your proposals that they seem to me unfortunately inexact or incomplete in their meaning and inadequate as a program for productive negotiations for peace.")

The President does not say that Soviet peace petitions, pacts and pronouncements are manufactured merely to disguise the less noble aims of Soviet diplomacy; he comments simply that,

> professions of peace by governmental leaders have not always been a dependable guide to their actual intentions. Moreover, it seems to me to be profitless for us to debate the question of which of our two governments wants peace the more . . . The heart of the matter becomes the determination of the terms on which the maintenance of peace can be assured, and the confidence that each of us can justifiably feel that these terms will be respected.

And, Mr. Eisenhower observes, "the need is, not to repeat what we already proclaim, but . . . to take concrete steps under present terms of the [UN] Charter that will bring about these relationships of friendship."

The concrete steps which the President puts before the Russians are:

—that the two governments agree "at least not to use veto power to prevent the Security Council from proposing methods for the pacific settlement of disputes pursuant to Chapter VI [of the UN Charter]."

—that the Soviets accept the view that German reunification is desirable and should be accomplished through free elections in both parts of Germany. Nothing is said of previous insistence by this country on the right of a reunified Germany to make any alliances it chooses—*i.e.*, a military alliance with NATO. Moreover, Mr. Eisenhower does more than refrain from repeating a demand which has always stuck in the Soviet craw: he implies a new willingness to set certain restrictions on the freedom of a

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reunited Germany. "The United States," he says,

> is prepared along with others, to negotiate specific arrangements regarding force levels and deployments and broad treaty undertakings, not merely against aggression but assuring positive reaction should aggression occur in Europe.

—that discussions be resumed on the matter of the right of the peoples in Eastern Europe "to choose the form of government under which they would live." It is proper for the President to restate the premise of Yalta, yet his very tone suggests that "liberation" is no longer an archstone of American policy. He even manages to turn the issue around so as to imply that the Hungarian experience should convince the Soviet leaders that a relaxation of Soviet pressures on Eastern Europe might forestall future incidents that could embarrass the Russians, as well as jeopardize the peace.

—that "outer space should be used only for peaceful purposes." Here, too, the President avoids any specifications for how this is to be accomplished, specifications which could at this stage doom the proposal to quick burial. What powers might be given what kind of a world agency for control of space traffic he does not say, but he does comment that,

> There are about to be perfected powerful new weapons which, availing of outer space, will greatly increase the capacity of the human race to destroy itself. If indeed it be the view of the Soviet Union that we should not go on producing ever newer types of weapons, can we not stop the production of such weapons which would use or, more accurately, misuse outer space, now for the first time opening up as a field for man's exploration? Should not outer space be dedicated to the peaceful uses of mankind and denied to the purposes of war? That is my proposal.

—that there be an end to the "now unrestrained production of nuclear weapons," and that existing stocks of fissionable materials for weapons be "steadily reduced by ascertainable transfers to peaceful purposes." The President remains firmly committed, as he should, to establishing means by which to assure compliance.

—that in addition to reducing the stocks of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and adding them to the stocks of material for peaceful purposes ("I should be glad," the President tells Bulganin, "to receive your suggestion as to what you consider to be an equitable ratio in this respect"), the testing of nuclear weapons be stopped, "not just for two or three years, but indefinitely." In the absence of any verifiable agreement to regulate and reduce the manufacture of fissionable materials for war, Mr. Eisenhower notes, it is essential that the US work to devise new weapons which would not, through fall-out, destroy "vast segments of human life":

> But if the production is to be stopped and the trend reversed, as I propose, then testing is no longer so necessary.

—that steps be taken toward "the controlled and progressive reduction of conventional weapons and military manpower."

—that finally, since "the capacity to verify the fulfillment of commitments is of the essence in all these matters, including the reduction of conventional forces and weapons . . .

> it would surely be useful for us to study together through technical groups what are the possibilities in this respect upon which we could build if we then decide to do so.

And as if to underscore the flexibility of his approach, Mr. Eisenhower adds that,

> these technical studies could, if you wish, be undertaken without commitment as to ultimate acceptance, or as to the interdependence, of the propositions involved.

The President wisely urges "preparatory work, with good will on both sides" as a "prerequisite to success," but concludes by saying that he is "ready to meet with the Soviet leaders to discuss the proposals mentioned in your letter and the proposals which I make."

By this one letter, Mr. Eisenhower has got us back on the long-deserted road of diplomacy. Let him not turn back. Let him re-state his objectives on every possible occasion. And let the Congress support his hand by restraining its own irresponsibles, and by giving the nation the kind of defense without which no diplomatic negotiations can lead to satisfactory settlements.

The President on Defense

THE President's unwillingness to permit release of the Gaither Committee report on national security recalls to mind a haunting phrase from childhood reading: "Believe me, *comparisons are inevitable.*" As we remember the circumstances, the Victorian author was having someone warn a young lady that her spouse's kisses would be sweeter if she had experienced no others with which to compare them. But now, since the report of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund panel ("International Security: The Military Aspect") could not be suppressed, comparisons *are* inevitable. Moreover, we understand that although there are some differences, both in scope and in detail, the message of the Gaither and Rockefeller reports is essentially the same on those subjects that both treat.

The President has heard the message, but he resists the moral. No one disputes the emphasis in his State of the Union message upon the importance of keeping the Strategic Air Command effective, though probably many would question his confidence that the problems here lie mostly ahead of us. His claims for what he has already

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done to overhaul the missile programs have already been challenged from Capitol Hill—where the budget demands of the Air Force for missiles are rapidly gaining the sanctity so long enjoyed by Air Force demands for money to spend on bombers. And he still refuses to listen to the charge that the Army has been cut below the point of prudence. In his message, indeed, he made only grudging acknowledgment that we should "maintain all necessary types of mobile forces to deal with local conflicts, *should there be need.*" (Italics added.) By contrast, the Rockefeller group, and, we believe, the Gaither group as well, devoted substantial parts of their reports to the problem of limited wars, and to the present inadequacies of our capability to meet the problem. The Rockefeller report, in one of its best passages, observes:

> It is . . . crucial to develop a notion of "adequacy" for each military mission so that we do not drain resources from some vital tasks by maintaining an excessive capacity in others.

It also says: "The basic problem of American strategy then is the ability to make effective choices." It is not a problem of strategy alone, but a problem that extends from deciding what we need and what we can afford, and includes all the myriad problems that arise when we try to get what we need with what we spend. But it is certainly true that we do not know what we need until we have some rounded conception of what we are going to use it for, which is the essence of strategy.

Because the problem of choice *is* "crucial" we suspect that nothing is likely to come out of all this Sputnik-induced excitement more important than reorganization of the defense establishment. The President promises his recommendations for legislation in a later message. His emphasis in his State of the Union message upon the achievement of "real unity" in "strategic planning and direction" suggests that he will propose some steps toward further unification and integration of the services. But his repeated mention of interservice "rivalry" and "disputes" might mean that he still counts upon effective leadership, particularly his own, to resolve the major problems of coordination.

The Rockefeller report calls for drastic reorganization, that would convert the Secretary of Defense into a Deputy Commander-in-Chief and would build a single general staff under the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, who is termed "Principal Military Advisor to the President and the Secretary of Defense." The Service Chiefs would be relegated to non-voting advisory status. All operational commands would be joint and would take their orders from the President through the Secretary of Defense and the "Principal Military Advisor." Moreover all ranks above the first star would be Department of Defense ranks—consequently all senior commanders would owe their commands to Defense and not to their Service. The Gaither report, we understand, comes to much the same thing, though with more emphasis upon the civilian Secretary and less upon the military Chairman—perhaps out of deference to the known views of some important Congressmen.

We hope that all these proposals may be considered by Congress—and by the public—on their real merits, and that the issue will not be confused by that old red herring, the "Prussian General Staff." Surely we can have civilian control without *strangling* the military with controls. And surely we can have a defense establishment that is responsible to the will of the people without pitting one service against the others in public battles, and reducing the President—who is the one who *ought* to be held responsible—to the status of a rather ineffectual referee.

BUT SOFT . . .

The object would be to clear away the rubble of old controversies . . . we must start again . . . we could start with a solemn pact of non-aggression.

—MR. MACMILLAN, January 4.

A PACT, or not a pact—that is the question;
Whether 'tis deadlier for the West to suffer
Unending deadlock with outrageous weapons,
Or to take steps against a mass of rubble,
And halt rearmament? To meet—to sign—
And by a signature to say we end
The headaches and the thousand ghastly shocks
The West is bare to—'twere a master-stroke
Devoutly to be wished. To sign—to halt—
To halt—perchance to boob! ay, there's the rub;
For after pacts, what double-cross may come,
When we have shuffled off our Treaty coils,
Must give us pause. There is the question-mark
That makes a trap of non-aggression pacts;
For who would bear the taunts of Muscovy,
The stabs of NATO, Opposition jeers,
The insolence of Allies, and the spurns
That moral leadership from neutrals takes,
When he himself might his concordat make
With a bare ball-point? Who would peace declare,
While stocking piles in readiness for strife,
But that the fear his footing might be missed
On undiscovered summits from whose bourne
Few wish him to return, muddles the wits,
And makes us rather choose ill-balanced Power
Than weight a balance that we know not of?
Thus caution doth make cowards of us all,
And thus the NATO view of retribution
Doth sickly o'er the tentative detente,
And diplomatic kites of fairest promise
Like half-cocked Puffniks sink and turn awry,
And miss the chance of action.

SAGITTARIUS

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"Good—now let's see you handle the wheel."

Back to McKinley?

THERE WERE no huzzahs when the President came to the passage in his message to Congress warning that we dare not go back to McKinley and protective tariffs. For there is growing sentiment in the Senate and House for doing just that, and an election year is not a favorable time for converting men from areas facing stiff import competition and rising unemployment into free traders.

The Reciprocal Trade Act expires in June, however, and the expanding trade needs of our allies demand new agreements lowering, not raising, US tariff barriers against them. In his address the President spoke out clearly for both a 5-year extension of the Act and the needed "broadened authority to negotiate." Unfortunately, the draft bill which the White House staff has prepared for Congress would take us away from rather than toward the place where President Eisenhower wishes us to go.

The Administration bill, prepared by a Cabinet committee with Commerce Secretary Weeks as chairman, calls for a 5-year extension of the Reciprocal Trade Act, but it also provides greater authority to *increase* tariffs under the "escape clause" and "peril point" provisions. At present, in cases of "serious injury" the Tariff Commission may raise tariff rates to 50 percent above the 1945 scale. Under the new plan the Commission could raise duties to 50 percent above the much higher Smoot-Hawley rates of 1934!

Two much-needed improvements in the Trade Act are not even suggested. It should be made clear that "serious injury" which entitles an industry to special protection, should mean more than inconvenience. And an emergency fund should be set up to finance the transfer of industries and workers to other employment when elimination of tariffs makes that necessary.

No more than 100,000 to 200,000 workers would have to shift jobs if all tariffs were eliminated, and about 4.5 million Americans now earn their living from foreign trade, the President estimates. But there are enough Congressmen from the affected areas to block further liberalization of the trade program. A plan for financing an orderly shift over in industries that were hurt might shift the balance of political support away from protectionism, but that would cost money. The White House has chosen instead to seek support for a weakened Reciprocal Trade Act from those who are eager to go back at least to Smoot-Hawley if not all the way back to McKinley.

Acheson versus Kennan

WE ARE not surprised at Dean Acheson's disavowal of the views George F. Kennan expressed in his BBC lectures in December though we share the regret, which must be widespread, that two such respected Americans should be at odds publicly and that Mr. Acheson should have felt compelled to retaliate with such ferocity. We are indebted to Arnold Wolfers, Director of the Washington Center of Foreign Policy Research, for an analysis that helps explain both the remarkably favorable reception of Mr. Kennan's views in Britain and on the Continent, and the equally marked disfavor with which they have been received by leading circles in the United States, regardless of party. Mr. Wolfers points out that throughout the non-Communist world, outside the United States and Latin America, the Western assumption that Russia plans to dominate the world by any means that seem promising, so long as they do not entail excessive risk, and that this expansion must be actively opposed from a position of military strength sufficient to *make* the risks of military adventure seem excessive to the Russians, is a partisan issue. In Europe those who support it and those who oppose are almost equal in strength. In Asia and elsewhere those who oppose are, in general, a large majority. But in the United States, by contrast, the policy has been supported by an overwhelming majority.

Thus, when Mr. Kennan spoke out he was listened to not only because he is a persuasive speaker, but also because of the longing of the widespread opposition abroad to believe that their views had at last found an influential echo in the US—in short, as Mr. Acheson said in his statement released January 11, because they hoped

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Mr. Kennan's views *were* representative of the Democratic Party, or some substantial portion of that party.

We have no doubt that Mr. Acheson is right. Mr. Kennan does *not* represent the Democratic Party, or any influential circle of American political leadership. Why is this so? Mr. Wolfer's analysis helps explain this too. He observes that to the United States the Cold War is *war,* and that in war it is the instinct of the American people to draw together. Bipartisanship in general foreign policy is a hope more often expressed by responsible leaders than achieved in practice, but bipartisanship in the conduct of a war is an American tradition. But why the difference, why do most Americans feel they are at war, when half of the population of Western Europe disagrees, and the vast majority in Asia and Africa reject the war analogy altogether? The answer is clear, even though it does not explain all the psychological puzzles that can be raised.

The main reason is that Americans feel *responsible;* the Europeans—at least half of them—feel helpless and resigned and hence are more prone to wishful thinking; while the new independencies of the former colonial world are too wrapped up in their own problems to busy themselves with the realities of Soviet purposes and tactics. We Americans are convinced of Russian expansionist intentions and know from experience that if those intentions are to be frustrated only we can do it.

It is well to remember that this conviction came slowly and that it might never have achieved near unanimity had the Russians played their cards better. Their betrayal of FDR's hopes after Yalta, and their aid to the Chinese Communists beginning after World War II did produce partisan differences in this country. Their attempt to exploit American fellow-travellers for espionage purposes likewise had a divisive effect, though it never became so clearly a partisan issue. But Stalin could not let well enough alone. The Berlin blockade and—above all—Korea left little room for doubt in American minds.

The hard lesson of East-West relations is, as we see it, that the Russians deliberately employ both the increase *and the relaxation* of tension in their campaign to divide, subvert and ultimately convert the non-Communist world. We saw in the aftermath of the Geneva "Summit" meeting of 1955 how little Soviet tactics had changed in this respect since the death of Stalin, how eagerly the Kremlin took advantage of hopes of real peace to move into the cockpit of the Middle East, while pressing the armament of Russian forces with nuclear weapons. Last year we saw how the Russian system deals with dissent in the brutal suppression of Hungary. When Mr. Kennan assumes, then, as he does assume in his Reith lectures, that international tension is as uncomfortable to the Russians as it is to the non-Communist World, and that we can end the Cold War by making concessions to demonstrate to the Kremlin our "good faith," most Americans are from Missouri.

Rifts in Conservative Ranks

IT WAS ABOVE all the split in the British Labour Party's ranks which forced Attlee into a General Election at the worst possible moment for himself, in autumn 1951. And now the Conservative Party is in the grip of a schism which makes the Labour Party's past troubles look like a storm in a teacup. Led by Peter Thorneycroft, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, all three of the ministers who are responsible for the Macmillan Government's general economic policy have resigned at one blow. They chose to make this spectacular demonstration at the very moment the Prime Minister was leaving on a six-week tour of the Commonwealth. The whole history of British politics has no example of a registration correspondence so frosty and bitter as the letters exchanged between Macmillan and Thorneycroft.

The immediate issue was the level of government expenditure estimated for the next financial year. Thorneycroft's financial policy depended on the government's setting an example both to business and labor by refusing to increase its expenditure over the present level. When Macmillan supported other ministers in the Cabinet by agreeing to a level of expenditure £50 million, or one percent, higher than the current year's, Thorneycroft resigned on the grounds that this would damage "the stability of the pound, the stabilization of prices, and the prestige and standing of our country in the world."

The resignations have split the Conservatives right down the middle. In an editorial entitled "Flinching" the *London Times* gives unqualified support to Thorneycroft. The *Daily Telegraph,* on the other hand, describes Thorneycroft as a prima donna, and calls his resignation unexpected and damaging. The real importance of the resignations is that they mark a substantial movement to the Center by the government, and give the right-wing malcontents both in Parliament and the country a major personality as leader. In the past few years mutiny among the Tory militants has been marked by large-scale abstentions in by-elections and by the secession of six of the "Suez rebels" from the party group in Parliament (one of these has just been readmitted). But the extremists have lacked a leader of national standing to give their movement a focus. Lord Salisbury was too aristocratic and retiring. Now Thorneycroft has thrown down the gauntlet to Macmillan with such contempt he can scarcely fail to put himself at the head of a movement which has deep roots.

Moreover his resignation comes at a time when the government is contemplating moves in the field of foreign policy which are bound to be unpopular with its own supporters—notably a major concession over Cyprus and a surrender to NATO pressure over the size of its forces in Germany. It looks as if Macmillan may return to London to find his party in a state of such anarchy that he has no alternative but to resign.

London DENIS HEALEY

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The Superficial Aspect

Horse Without Rider

CIVILIAN control of the armed forces is essential to the survival of any democratic government; but there is a real difference between being controlled and being smothered.

The recent complaint of one of the top uniformed men that between him and the Secretary of Defense there are 19 civilian officials is enough to explain half, and probably a good deal more than half of our military deficiencies. One need not be a military expert to know that a man with 19 bosses is not likely to do fast and efficient work, in the armed forces or anywhere else.

Perhaps what we need is, as General Gavin and others insist, one top commander; but it is possible that a better idea would be a civilian Secretary in immediate contact with the armed forces, and not 19 steps removed.

The solution would seem to depend upon the answer to another question, to wit, with whose defense is the Secretary of Defense charged? If it is defense of the country, that is one thing; but if it is defense of the Administration and the budget, that is something else. If the Secretary must defend, first of all, the party in power, then it is prudent not to expose him to the ravening admirals and generals, and a padding of 19 minor civilians may be reasonable enough.

On the other hand, if his chief function is defense of the country, then he ought to be not merely in close contact with the high brass, he ought himself to be the top of the brass. His civilian character ought merely to release him from partiality to any one service, not commit him to partiality, either to the Treasury or his party's National Committee. He should leave it to the Secretary of the Treasury to defend the budget and to the President to defend the Administration, while he defends the country. If he ends by offending both, well, that is an occupational risk that he must accept.

Truman erred when, after the death of Forrestal, he named Louis A. Johnson, who defended the Administration to the detriment of the armed forces. But Truman retrieved the error in 1950, when he yanked George C. Marshall out of his well-earned retirement, and made him serve long enough to train Robert Lovett.

The grievous error of the past five years may possibly have been the lack of a Supreme Commander, but it is more likely that it was the presence of a Secretary of the Treasury who tended to take over everything, and a President who tended to take over nothing. Even before defense of his health began to demand Mr. Eisenhower's first attention his conception of his office as that of a referee, rather than that of a bullwhacker, led him to leave political considerations to subordinates who should have been devoting their entire attention to their immediate jobs.

It is ironical that the weakness of the Administration should have been exposed most glaringly in connection with military affairs, the President's specialty; but it is an error to suppose that it is confined to any one department. The essential weakness is the President's misconception of his own position. He is not a referee. He is a leader and, as far as his Cabinet is concerned, a driver. He has in his hands the reins and the whip, and if he fails to use either at the appropriate time, his Administration will fail.

Mr. Eisenhower's conception of the Presidency may be finer than the actuality. Perhaps the Chief Magistrate ought to be a man above the battle. But that is not the fact, and it never has been the fact. George Washington tried to make it so, but couldn't. The President is in the midst of the fight, and he is going to trample down his foes, or be trampled. John Adams tried to follow Washington's ideal, and he was trampled. Jefferson frankly abandoned it and set his foot on everybody who got in his way, thereby becoming the second great President.

EISENHOWER has consistently refused to face this brutal fact. He has used neither the reins nor the whip. As a result, the situation has been getting more and more out of hand, until today such a uniformed man as Admiral Rickover says "it is almost too late" to catch up with Russia, such a civilian as Professor M. P. McNair, the economist, says flatly that Russia has won the Cold War, and two separate gangs of tycoons, headed by Gaither and Nelson Rockefeller, turn in reports that make the ordinary man's hair stand on end.

None of this offers the slightest indication that Dwight D. Eisenhower is a bad man. But it is massive evidence that he is a bad man for President, a very different thing. It confirms the suspicions of those who have always believed that a military career is poor training for that office. However, President he is and will be for nearly three years, and denouncing him will accomplish nothing. Our cue is not to burst into lamentation or vituperation, but to get set for trouble, merely taking note of the facts so that we may avoid repeating the error in 1960.

GERALD W. JOHNSON

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INDIA:
Deepening Crisis

I. What India Can Do

by MATTHEW J. KUST

Washington attorney MATTHEW J. KUST *observed US economic and technical assistance at first hand from 1951 to 1954 as legal adviser for aid programs to US embassies in a broad South Asian area covering India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Nepal, Ceylon, Burma and Indonesia. In 1954 he returned to the United States and, as a member of the Harvard Program in International Legal Studies, devoted two years to the study of internal obstacles to economic development in the aid-receiving countries. He is the author of a pioneering study of India,* Taxation for Economic Development. *From 1946 to 1951, Mr. Kust was an associate in the tax department of the New York law firm of Sullivan and Cromwell, and he is now engaged in international legal practice.*

MIDWAY in its Second Five Year Plan India is experiencing a serious and worsening crisis in its economic development, a crisis which must inevitably, sooner or later, become a political crisis. In the short run this crisis could be resolved by enough aid, soon enough, from the United States and other nations of the West. Indeed, I believe that the United States should greatly increase its assistance to India's development both as a matter of national morality and as a matter of national self-interest. But the present crisis emanates primarily from certain fundamental weaknesses in India's own policies, especially tax policies. In the long run these deficiencies must be rectified if India is to achieve stable economic and political development.

We have been hearing much lately about the foreign exchange shortfall which led India to request at least $600 million in emergency credit from the United States. This is a serious problem, of course, because India must import capital goods and technical assistance for its industrialization. India's foreign-exchange difficulties, however, are overshadowed by a still more fundamental dilemma in India's domestic effort to exploit its own resources. This dilemma comes down, in the final analysis, to the food crisis about which we may well hear more during the coming months.

Food production—and *control* of the food produced—is the key to rapid economic development in the under-developed countries. An agricultural economy not fortunate enough to possess some product such as petroleum demanded by the world market has little choice but to get the necessary resources for its industrialization from its agriculture. Agricultural surpluses must be generated not only as the primary source for capital for industrialization but to assure that economic development is not undermined by uncontrollable inflation.

To avoid inflation the vicious circle between inadequate food production, rising incomes and rising prices must be broken. The under-developed countries have large numbers of under-employed people living on a low subsistence level. As they are brought into greater employment they spend most of their increased incomes on food. According to the latest National Sample Survey, food comprises 61.3 percent of consumer expenditures in India; a survey of agricultural labor concludes further that 85 percent of all spending by India's landless laborers, the most depressed economic group in the country, goes for food. If, therefore, food supplies do not increase together with increases in income and employment under the Five Year Plans, food prices will rise.

This is precisely what has been happening in India during the past two years. Reserve Bank statistics show that food prices rose 56.7 percent from June 4, 1955, to May 25, 1957. Since May further increases have been recorded. It is also interesting to note the difference in price increases among the chief food grains of India during this period. The prices of rice and wheat rose 67.9 percent and 53.9 percent while the prices of two coarse grains which form the staple diet of the poor—known as gram and jowar—rose 96.5 and 196.8 percent. This phenomenal price rise can no doubt be attributed to the increased demand by the under-employed who have gained new purchasing power under the Five Year Plans.

It appears now that the food problem will be further aggravated by a failure of the monsoon rains. Reports from India indicate that severe drought is destroying the grain crops in Eastern and Central India. About 80 million people will be affected. A monsoon failure at this time would not be altogether unexpected. The mon-

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soon cycle is usually a five-year cycle, and the normal five-year period includes one good and one bad year with the other three ranging in between. India's last bad year was in 1951-52. Yet if this is, in fact, a year of a monsoon failure the problem of food shortages and food control will become acute.

The Indian Government remained complacent about the developing food crisis much too long. Food price increases were blamed on hoarders and speculators. These are, of course, only symptoms of the food shortage. They aggravate the crisis and must therefore be dealt with sharply. But they do not create it. The reasons are much more deep-seated.

INDIA'S worsening crisis is primarily the result of first, insufficient agricultural production and second, failure to channel a significant portion of the agricultural production into economic development.

Low food production is the result of an unproductive agriculture which suffers from poor land utilization and antiquated agricultural techniques. Moreover, India's agriculture is largely dependent on the vagaries of the monsoon. To be sure, India is pursuing a great number of irrigation projects, but these have not yet provided the answer to the undependable rains.

India's food production is probably the lowest in the world. While China, her big competitor in Asia, produces 185 million tons of food grains for a population of 580 million, India produces only 68 million tons of food grains for a population of 385 million.

As for India's failure to channel a significant portion of agricultural production into economic development, this can be attributed, first and foremost, to ineffective agricultural taxation. The Indian tax system is the most lopsided in the world. At the same time that a small group (not exceeding a million persons) subject to the income, capital gains, wealth, expenditure, commodity and estate taxes pays the highest tax in the world, Indian agriculturalists, who contribute approximately one-half the national production, pay perhaps the lowest tax in the world. Only about *one percent* of gross agricultural output is appropriated by the government through taxation. This contrasts significantly with China where approximately 25 percent of gross agricultural output is appropriated through taxation and other measures.

The land revenue system in India is an archaic tax. It is based on a monetary assessment per acre fixed for long periods of time. Although this system calls for reassessments every 30 years, these are, for the most part, now in arrears. Most of the fixed assessments are at least a generation old; many have not been changed for 50 years and others, under the Bengal permanent settlement, date back to 1793. Although a hundred years ago about one-third of agricultural output was taken up by the land revenue system, since then the combination of the system's own rigidity and price inflation have eroded away its effectiveness to a point where today only one percent of agricultural output is appropriated by this tax.

This unsatisfactory situation is further aggravated by the Indian Constitution which prohibits the Central Government from taxing agriculture. Agriculture is thus free of the federal income, capital gains and wealth taxes. The states are empowered to levy an agricultural income tax but thus far none have done so effectively. It is, of course, open to question whether it is administratively feasible to levy an effective agricultural income tax in India, where holdings are small and financial records nonexistent. At the same time, however, the states have done nothing about reforming the archaic land revenue system. The taxation of agriculture continues to go by default while development grows more difficult each year.

In a country where half or more of the national product is derived from agriculture it would seem axiomatic that domestic savings for industrialization must be derived to a large extent from agriculture. If these potential savings are allowed to be consumed in the rural area because of ineffective taxation the possible rate of savings and investment for industrialization will be greatly diminished.

That is what is happening in India today. This was already clear during the First Five Year Plan when the states fell short, by 34 percent, of the revenue surpluses required of them. The problem is now becoming acute in the Second Plan. The present Plan requires the states to raise about $450 million in new taxation. But instead of revenue surpluses from either old or new taxation most of the states are running revenue deficits.

Ineffective agricultural taxation also results in inadequate control of the limited food supply. If the potential food surpluses are not appropriated by agricultural taxation or other measures they end up either in unnecessary consumption in the countryside or in the hands of hoarders and speculators. This aggravates the inflation inherent in a food shortage economy and causes food prices to soar. Sound food policy for economic development, therefore, requires that the food surpluses in the hands of the wealthier agriculturalists be appropriated through taxation. Moreover, it would be advisable to collect the agricultural tax in kind in order to keep the grain out of the hands of traders and speculators.

Failure to tax effectively and soaring food prices are having a destructive effect on financing of the Second Five Year Plan. Revenue surpluses in the states are not materializing and inflation is undermining both public borrowing and deficit finance. *It appears at this time that only about one-half the financial resources planned will be possible.*

A more effective agricultural tax preferably collected in kind, buttressed by state-trading in food grains and, if necessary, by food price control and rationing, would make possible a greater rate of economic development in India by generating additional savings from agriculture for industrialization and aiding immeasurably in con-

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trolling food prices and inflation. Price stability would then make possible greater deficit finance and public borrowing for the Five Year Plans.

The economic development of Japan is noteworthy in this respect. During the period 1890-1920 Japan pursued steadfastly two policies. The first was to increase agricultural output rapidly with very little capital investment through increased use of fertilizers and improved farming techniques. The second was to appropriate about one-third of the agricultural output through heavy taxation and other economic measures for the industrialization of the country.

Russia exploited its agriculture to the utmost during its first few Five Year Plans in order to derive the necessary savings for its industrialization. China is now emulating this method by appropriating at least 25 percent of her agricultural output for industrialization through heavy taxation and compulsory purchases of grains.

JAPAN, Russia and China, of course, employed draconian methods which would be incompatible with India's desire to achieve economic development within a democratic framework. On the other hand, it seems that India has gone to the opposite extreme in her policies toward agriculture so that economic development may not be at all possible. It does not appear to be necessary (nor may it be economically feasible in view of India's low agricultural productivity) to tax agriculture as heavily as Japan did or as China is doing today. It would, however, appear economically and administratively feasible to tax about 10 percent of agricultural output in India. This would raise an additional billion dollars of revenue for economic development annually and assure the success of the Second Five Year Plan.

Indians themselves usually express misgivings about suggestions for increasing agricultural taxation. The general response is that the agriculturalist is too poor. To be sure, numerically speaking, most Indian agriculturalists are too poor for additional tax burdens. The landless laborers and their families—some 90 million—have no additional tax capacity. Indeed, India's Agricultural Labor Enquiry estimated that this depressed group, which comprises about 37.5 percent of the agriculturalists, is receiving only 10 percent of the total agricultural output in wages. Of the remaining agriculturalists, perhaps one-half are marginal tenants and owners who receive another 20 percent of output. We are left, if these estimates are sound, with a striking conclusion: the top 30 percent of the agriculturalists claim 70 percent of the agricultural output. Clearly, it seems to me, this upper group of wealthier farmers has the tax capacity to pay the necessary 10 percent of agricultural output to the government. India's problem is to design an agricultural tax which can reach effectively, to this extent, these wealthier farmers.

Therein, however, resides the political problem. These

same wealthier farmers are also the leaders and molders of political opinion in the Indian villages. Many are prominent supporters of the governing Congress Party and indeed of all parties. Imposition of a heavier agricultural tax upon them would undoubtedly present enormous internal political problems for the Congress Party and might even lose it elections. This is something no American politician will have difficulty understanding.

Thus far the Congress Party has not found the political courage to begin the necessarily long, drawn-out task of reforming India's inadequate agricultural taxation. Yet on this issue, I believe, India will determine in the long run whether it is possible for an under-developed country to achieve rapid economic development within a democratic framework. For most under-developed countries, like India, must get the domestic capital for economic development from agriculture. Ironically, as Alexander Eckstein has written in these pages (Special Report on Communist China, *The New Republic*, May 13, 1957), more and more commanding use of government power by representative leaders today may be necessary in India "to avert slipping into a whole-hog totalitarian economic pattern tomorrow." India will ultimately decide the issue for itself, but as the drama is enacted in the years immediately ahead the United States can play a decisive role, and it is this which I would like to examine next week.

First of two articles.

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The Tyranny Of Democratic Manners

"If Woodrow Wilson were in politics today, he would probably have to submit to 'Woody' — if not 'Willie' — and wipe that purposeful, responsible look off his face."

by MORTON CRONIN

I MAINTAIN that democratic manners—typified by the practice of calling the boss by his first name—have reached the point in our country where they conduce not to the preservation of personal dignity but to the abject submission of one man to another. These manners, gradually developed in colonial and post-revolutionary days, worked well in a society largely of self-sufficient farmers. But circumstances have changed, with the usual ironical result.

What happens on the job at the present time? An employee greets the boss by his first name, sits down in his presence, wears the same kind of clothes the boss wears, avoids the use of *sir,* and ostensibly comports himself in general as if he and the boss were as equal as two farmers. But of course he and the boss are not equal, and this inequality must be signalized. It must be signalized, first, because the employee is anxious to please the boss, who can advance or impede his fortunes; and, secondly, because the boss is anxious that his authority receive recognition, without which he cannot function with any confidence.

In the absence of overt and conventional methods of expressing deference, how then does the American employee acknowledge the boss's superior status? He does so by perfecting a subtle repertoire of body movements and vocal expressions. This repertoire includes the boyish grin, the deprecatory cough, the unfinished sentence, the appreciative giggle, the drooping shoulders, the head-scratch and the bottom-waggle. But there are employees, the truly gifted ones—as actors, they would adorn the Stanislavski school—who can dispense with these definable maneuvers and simply *live* the part, their whole being radiating a kind of sweet eloquence of submission.

Now this body language, in both its definable and indefinable forms, is almost impossible to fake successfully, at least in any long-continued relationship. If it is not accompanied quite genuinely by the emotions appropriate to it, it will be contradicted and rendered sinister by involuntary movements and expressions which accord with the individual's true feelings. It is easy to execute a military salute, regardless of one's private thoughts, but the deprecatory cough—to say nothing of the Stanislavski method—requires great sincerity, else they appear villainous.

American manners, in short, decree egalitarian behavior in a hierarchical society. The result is that a subordinate, compelled to behave formally and superficially in a democratic way, is forced in making his adjustments to the facts of life to behave informally and profoundly in a hierarchical way. It should be just the opposite—the system of etiquette ought to furnish him with formal gestures of respect for his superiors and let his informal self work out its own salvation. It should be easier to render the boss what is the boss's without throwing in one's soul too.

Out of a doctrinaire devotion to palsy-walsy manners has sprung that misshapen, anomalous growth, the despotism of the nice guy. It is a truism that success on the job depends less on competence in performing one's duties than it does on ability to Get Along With People. But what is left out of this statement—it is not sporting to mention it—is that the word *People* refers to just one person—the boss. And the boss, barred from receiving any obvious obeisance, is commonly in a chronic state of insecurity—what he craves most of all is the assurance that he is really and truly the boss. The nice guy, with his fine talent for the right body language, provides this assurance better than the man who is merely efficient, is rewarded accordingly, and thus sets the pace for his clumsy fellows.

But the despotism of the nice guy reaches its fully convoluted luxuriance when, as happens, he himself is made the boss. He has not been soft-spoken, unassertive,

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accommodating and eager to please out of sheer masochism. However various the motives which explain his personality, ambition is one of them. Good Old Charlie likes the idea of being a boss. And if his underlings could give him a snappy salaam every day, all might be well. But Charlie would recoil from anything so Oriental in its disrespect for human dignity. All that he expects is that his subordinates will make the same sensitive, informal adjustments to his person which he used to make for the boss, a process which practically requires that they exchange their personalities for his. Only a few of them are capable of such virtuosity—Charlie's word for it is *loyalty*—but most of them do well enough to demonstrate that it is really the nice guy in authority, more than the rambunctious one, who has made America the natural habitat of the yes-man. Of course the situation is complicated by the fact that Charlie soon becomes pitifully dependent on his loyal supporters, one of whom usually emerges as a split-personality and, like a skillful wife, sweetly dominates Charlie in all things.

Everybody complains that life is too competitive, but our national imagination is so limited that the principal remedies proposed for this or any other social disease are economic remedies—better jobs, better houses, and more social security. However justified on other grounds, these remedies, beyond a certain point, just hot up this particular fire, for life becomes not less competitive but decidedly more so as one moves up the ladder. Naturally. There is more to compete for. But still the fever could be brought down a few points by a modification of manners. Once men acquire everything they need—a condition soon reached in this country—they struggle primarily for recognition. But with manners as frustratingly egalitarian as they are, who knows when he has it made? Under present circumstances the ambitious can discern no resting place short of a crushing superiority of popular fame or material wealth. Hence, the devotion of many originally fine minds to Hollywood, Broadway and the medical profession.

Consider, for instance, the folly of our disparagement of honorific titles. If a mayor were regularly addressed as *Your Honor,* and could count on this distinction after leaving office, he would be heartened in his efforts to remain honest. As it is, he must play it democratic, poohpooh his title, and prepare against the day when, defeated for re-election, he must face the indifference of the public at large. Mayors are commonly corrupt, judges rarely. But judges are unfailingly objects of formal homage in office, and keep their titles for life.

The sobriquets which used to attach to politicians—*Old Hickory, Tennessee Johnson, The Little Giant, The Plumed Knight*—conferred distinction. They were titles of a sort and reflected a popular disposition to honor character, individuality and superior force in public men. But now the popular taste, encouraged by gee-whiz politicians who tutoyer one another in public, is for first names and demure diminutives—*Ike, Dick, Stu, Bob, Estes* and *Foster.* What makes these familiarities characteristic of our time is precisely that they ignore what is distinctive in either the personalities or the duties of the men they designate and thus suggest that government is best which is managed by Good Joes recently graduated from a basketball team. If Woodrow Wilson were in politics today, he would probably have to submit to *Woody*—if not *Willie*—and wipe that purposeful and responsible look off his face.

But the avoidance of titles of respect is equally the fashion among highbrows. Professors in famous universities, for instance, make fun of their fellows in teachers' colleges because the latter often call one another *professor* or *doctor,* instead of plain *mister,* and are notorious for responding benignly when their students use these terms. But on this point it is the prominent professors whose perception is defective, for an examination of their total behavior reveals that they are much less democratic than those they smile at for putting on airs. Occupying positions in institutions of outstanding prestige—positions for which they have scrambled ferociously—they can afford to underemphasize their status, like wealthy men who insist that their limousines be inconspicuously black. The fact is that they maintain great distance between town and gown and also between their students and themselves.

Many of them deplore their remoteness, but without an improvement of manners there is little they can do about it. Since they discourage formal acknowledgments of their status, any meeting between them and townfolk, or even between them and their own students, imposes on both sides such a strain on their respective capacities for the appropriate body language that it is almost unbearable. The man at Lower South Central Normal suffers his students to call him professor—doctor—sir—but he can often be observed chatting loftily and genially among them, snapping his suspenders the while, undisturbed by their politely impudent questions.

But the deprecation of titles and of formal manners in general characterizes all sorts of highbrows, not just those in universities. Yet no group in America complains so clamorously that it is not sufficiently respected and appreciated. And those among them who complain most bitterly are the ones who embrace the mucker pose passionately, not only in their speech and manners but even in their dress. This furious contradiction necessitates a furious resolution. Men who will not permit their attainments to be recognized conventionally and symbolically will seek such recognition radically and violently.

But democratic manners have not promoted unnatural relations among men in their economic and professional careers. They have also corrupted relations between men and women in their romantic and domestic lives. Here,

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however, the democratization of manners has been one-sided. Many suitable formalities still govern the man's behavior—he follows a woman through a door, sashays around to the gutter-side of the street, etc., etc., in all of which he pays decorous tribute to her as a woman. But our culture has relieved her almost entirely of any reciprocal gestures of conventional tribute to him as a man. She does not curtsy, nor use respectful forms of address, nor stand at his shoulder when he has his picture taken. Her grandmother practiced a sweet, conventional smile. She grins, laughs uproariously, and talks in a loud voice. For her the emphasis is now completely on body language —but, unlike that used by men with their bosses, hers is *challenging* rather than deferential.

Since he does not receive from women any standard courtesies, courtesies which, besides telling him that just being a man is a thing of some consequence, would remind him of his responsibilities, the American male gravitates in his dealings with women toward one of two roles—that of a little boy or that of a predator. Frequently he ricochets between the two. In the first role he simply abandons the effort to command respect as a male and, oddly enough, often becomes an abstract enthusiast for women, like a dull student whose every humiliation in class somehow increases his school spirit. In the role of predator he compels specific respect for himself as a man in the one decisive way that is still open. And, fortunately or unfortunately, such consolation has grown steadily more available. Women as well as men are symbolic creatures, and the radical elimination of ceremony reduces the human element in them and increases the animal part. Frustrated in her naturally human desire to express her feelings formally and stylistically, the American woman must express them directly and elementally.

But the inhuman effects of democratic manners afflict another fundamental relationship, that between parents and children. They spawn the ultimate in absurdity in those instances where parents, assuming the character of domestic politicians, encourage their youngsters to abjure the use of *mother* and *father* in favor of their parents' first names. The trouble with *mother* and *father* of course is that they suggest authority (as well as love), and thus strike an undemocratic note in the family. Often the parents' real motives, like those of tail-wagging politicians, are more complicated, for people who shun authoritative titles commonly shrink from responsibility too. But they could not persevere in this self-deception if our dedication to democratic manners did not furnish them with an exalted rationale.

Fortunately, this first-name business for parents is as yet limited. But manners generally are primitive enough in American homes, as anyone knows who accepts invitations from his friends to dine *en famille*. It is undemocratic to set up a children's table. It is also undemocratic to encourage children to listen to adult conversation. Parents and guests, consequently, listen to children's conversation. During intervals—when little mouths happen simultaneously to be stuffed up with food, for instance—the parents inevitably discuss the subject of children. Children, they tell you, are *people*. The children express themselves. The parents preen themselves. The only person who does not get a piece of this democracy is the guest. This lopsided egalitarianism even favors dogs and cats, with whom a guest must often cope with no assistance whatever from his host. They too, it seems, are *people*.

I have nearly finished. But I know that some fool—most likely, one with a Ph.D.—will read this article and forever after assert as a well-known fact that I yearn for a restoration of Tsardom, for a reinvigoration of the Hindu caste system and for a truly Chinese subjugation of women and children. So let me recapitulate, in the course of which I shall add one or two points that I forgot to mention earlier.

A sensible system of manners, sensibly formal, performs various services. Besides acting as a constant reminder of some important facts of life, it affords human beings the distinctly human satisfactions of symbolic expression. Besides making collective living possible, it provides a person, thanks to its formalities, with protective armor against collective pressures. For these formalities allow the individual to acquiesce in the social order while reserving his final judgment of it. They enable him to pledge his loyalty to men in authority without making those fine adjustments whose long-term results are the same as those of brainwashing.

Democratic manners in America are eating the heart out of American democracy. With no impressive way of saluting the system, and the position which a given official occupies in it, one must prostrate himself before the man. There is a country where such prostration is even more prostrate than in America. There the humblest citizen calls his mighty ruler *comrade*.

I suggest a prudent reform in American manners, not a revolution. If the only alternative to egalitarian manners is a nerveless society exhausted by protocol and ceremony, then this discussion is futile. But that is not the only alternative, except in the minds of latter-day Jacobins for whom the stratifications of the *ancien regime* are more real than the proletarianizations of their own time. There are in-between solutions, attuned to reality, however they resist simple and consistent formulation, as the English know, and as America, in her own fashion, can discover. Pedantic democrats presume to speak for wisdom, creative ability and service, as against mere money in the bank. But without a rectification of manners most men would rather achieve a Cadillac than such virtues, for these virtues, unacknowledged in any regular way, do not show on a man, at least not conspicuously, whereas a Cadillac shows on anyone, conspicuously.

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BOOKS & COMMENT

James Gould Cozzens: Novelist of the Republic

by Irving Howe

By Love Possessed is a mediocre and pretentious novel written by an experienced craftsman. This judgment seems so obvious that under ordinary circumstances it would hardly require elaboration. But the circumstances are, clearly, not ordinary. That the novel has been a fabulous popular success; that it should have succeeded, as one gathers it has, in impressing people as a work of wisdom and significance; that it has been praised by the middlebrow reviewers in terms a critic might reserve for, say, *Moby Dick*—all this suggests the presence of a new cultural problem.

The problem, as it happens, has less to do with the book than with its public life. Simply as a novel, *By Love Possessed* seems already to have been lost in the smoke of a gathering *Kulturkampf;* almost everyone who writes about it finds himself referring to what other people have said, and rightly so, since it exists as a fact in our culture rather than as an independent work of art. Mr. Cozzens, a writer deficient in the more tender sentiments but well-equipped with a sense of the sardonic, will not be the last to appreciate the ambiguousness of his long-delayed triumph.

The middlebrow critics have seized upon the novel as a rallying-cry in their persistent campaign to discredit literary seriousness. Their choice is a shrewd one. For *By Love Possessed*, as I shall try to show, not merely exemplifies what they want but, more important, allows them to feel virtuous in wanting it; the values of Cozzens, while not really theirs, are peculiarly useful to them. Thus Mr. John Fischer, editor of *Harper's* and a man who seems to regard literary criticism as a personal threat, presents Cozzens as the champion of the "classical mind," literary sensibleness, moral rectitude and traditional American virtue. It follows, for Mr. Fischer, that Cozzens has been deliberately—no, outrageously—slighted by "the magisterial critics whose encyclicals appear in the literary quarterlies. . . . " This note is also struck by many other reviewers as they pronounce *By Love Possessed* to be "great," "a masterpiece," and (most revealing, since it comes from Clifton Fadiman) "mature." All of which, but particularly the stress upon "maturity," forms part of what Dwight Macdonald has called the Middlebrow Counter-Revolution.

Now, happily, Macdonald has struck back. In the January *Commentary* he prints a witty dissection of the verbal fuzziness and moral inadequacy of *By Love Possessed;* and despite his failure to do justice to Cozzens' earlier work and his implicit use of a standard of prose style—lucid, sharp and epigrammatic—that is not aways relevant to the novel as a genre, Macdonald scores heavily. We may now expect angry rebuttals, and since any quarrel is better than our present cultural somnolence, let me add a bit of fuel to the fire.

COZZENS began his career with several pieces of juvenilia and then wrote two short works, *S. S. San Pedro* and *Castaway,* both of which are livelier in technique and less stagnant in moral assumption than his later books. In *S. S. San Pedro*, which portrays the break-up of a ship's community when an aging captain loses his grip and no one takes over his authority, Cozzens showed a notable gift for disciplined narrative. In *Castaway* he wrote a fable about a man alone in an empty department store who, despite the presence of material necessities, quickly disintegrates. The writing in *Castaway* can be very good; the sentences are formed with a care for effects of rhythm and color that one seldom finds in Cozzens' later, more portentous novels; and the book as a whole is perhaps the only one in which his capacity for descriptive notation is fully controlled by his motivating ideas.

After these experiments Cozzens turns to what might as well be called his dominant manner. He now becomes a quite conventional novelist, either uninterested in or unable to use the 20th Century advances in technique; he strives for and often achieves a strong, efficient but rather flavorless style. It is a decent, workmanlike style, neither exalted nor corrupt, and generally most useful when approaching the tone of anonymous objectivity. It serves far better for locating objects in the external world than for projecting a vision of life through accumulation of metaphor or nuances of inflation. It is a style, in short, that is likely to reassure people who find modern literature bewildering.

STRUCTURALLY, Cozzens worked out a scheme that does represent a certain deviation from—though hardly an improvement upon — the conventional novel. What seems particularly to interest him as a writer is the weight of social and moral pressures that a community brings to bear upon one of its significant members, generally a professional man who both leads and serves it. It is this idea of friction that is central to Cozzens' work, far more so than the patterns of drama or the risks of tragedy. As a result he does not generally use plot in his novels, at least in the traditional sense of a coherent action moving through time and guided toward climax and resolution. Instead, he concentrates on the moment before climax. We are brought very quickly to this moment and then are stopped for a series of dogged investigations of group after group, representative figure after figure, as each of these impinges the protagonist and multiplies the pressures to which he is subject. Meanwhile the action, to the extent that there is one, hangs suspended, waiting for Cozzens to amass the necessary data that might have come more dramatically and organically through a use of plot.

Before trying to indicate the strengths and weaknesses that follow from this procedure, let me add that Cozzens' interest in the relationships between a group and its major figure does not become the occasion for investigating a conflict between his hero's private self and public role; Cozzens would probably reject such a split as evidence of romanticism. He is not much concerned with the idea of the self, and he certainly does not share the exalted valuation most modern novelists place upon

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its inviolability. I suspect that he would regard the whole notion of personality —which in modern literature often means the capacity of the self to mold at least part of one's social being—as a positive nuisance.

What leads Cozzens to his typical subject matter is, first, a quite American fascination with the routines and demands of professional life (he tinkers with legal details the way your neighbor does with an old car) and, second, a view of moral experience. The first of these does not come, as it might with a writer like John O'Hara, to a feeling that what people do is more interesting than what they are; Cozzens, for long stretches of his work, seems honestly unable to notice much difference between the two. As a result, whenever anything more than appetite or duty is involved, he is quite poor at establishing the motives of his characters, and his psychology has a way of disintegrating into the ragtags of home-made behaviorism. Like certain other American novelists, he seems to feel that a conclusive insight has been achieved when he refers to sex as an "itch."

COZZENS repeatedly turns to the theme that the accumulation of experience (which in his novels often means learning to get a job done because it has to be done) shatters moral presuppositions —and shatters them to the point where a serious effort to realize the intentions behind them forces one to violate their surface claims and indeed, to engage in what might seem to be dubious conduct. For working up a novel this notion is about as good as most others, though in Cozzens' later books it hardens into a truculent ideology which seems to me both morally dispiriting and esthetically crippling. But of that, more in a moment.

In one of his least well-known novels, *Men and Brethren*, published in 1936, Cozzens managed to put these technical devices and moral notions to good use. *Men and Brethren* is a compact novel free from the disastrous ambition to write the Big Book that would mar Cozzens' later work. It focuses upon a few days in the life of an Episcopalian minister who is suddenly beset by a variety of crises: some he meets by falling back upon his sanctioned asceticism, others by an unconventional yet morally effective use of his special powers (he quietly arranges an abortion for a distressed parishioner), and in at least one case by knowingly funking his responsibility. One reason Cozzens' formula works in this novel is that the assumptions about a minister's conduct are so rigid and familiar that not much space is needed for blocking out the ways in which the other characters may claim his attention or violate his solace. The result is both economical and pleasing.

As one might expect, the typical structure and situation of Cozzens' novels yield typical strengths and weaknesses.

Many of his books are freighted with heavy loads of information about the professional activities of their heroes (in *By Love Possessed* this becomes an almost *Time*-like display of inconsequential accuracy). The American respect for technology becomes in Cozzens an unconcealed admiration for the man who uses his mind for precise utilitarian ends and who is impatient with other ideas about the value of thought. Though at any given point a Cozzens novel tends to resemble a sociological casebook in which the data have been neatly assembled but not finally grasped, he does manage, more often than not, to put his specialized information to some novelistic use. If, as Gertrude Stein said, remarks don't make literature, then neither does information; but information can help authenticate a locale and root characters in the circumstances of their lives. No novel has ever been spoiled merely by an accurate statement of fact.

Cozzens is at his best when closely examining those moments of abrasion that inevitably arise because a man's competence at his work brings him into unpredictable difficulties with colleagues and friends. And in general, he often succeeds in the novelist's elementary task of creating the illusion of verisimilitude. One believes that his world is "there," though one almost never believes that he has plumbed or understood it—or even felt for it—with that imaginative mastery which marks the first-rate novelist.

The weaknesses are also recurrent. Cozzens' device of sliding from section to section, or flashback to flashback, in order to show the convergence of pressures upon his heroes, almost always creates difficulties. Either this sort of section seems merely illustrative of the novel's larger intent, so that we plough through it merely to discover its relation to the main theme, or it becomes a piece of sprawling representation, in which tyrannical informativeness leads to an exhaustion of interest.

SIMILAR TROUBLES beset Cozzens in his characterization. Since so much of the material in his novels is supplied in order to clarify and hasten a central crisis, the subsidiary figures have a way of wilting into lifelessness; and when

The Figurehead

STEPPING on air in slippered toes,
Arms slanting back where bowsprit rose
When seafoam flaked her chiseled hair,
Suspended thus, leaning on air,

Uprears against the museum-wall
As though a sudden wind had caught her;
And yet where no wind is at all,
Where no sea is she sails ghost-water.

Swan-breasting seas that are not there,
The rage that's in her painted stare—
Remembers yet what seas she drew,
What waiting port, what unreached shore.

All's past and done with—ship and crew
Drowned in that past we voyage for.
As backward race the waves, so we
Plunge on and backwards go instead—

The relics of our history
Widowed like this figurehead.

R. W. STALLMAN

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Cozzens endows them with a few pat idiosyncracies, he usually does no more than aggravate the problem.

The leading characters, in turn, are frequently sentimentalized, not through the usual identification with suffering and sensitiveness, but through a perverse admiration for their ordinariness of spirit, their rudeness of manner, and their contempt for tenderness of feeling. When Hemingway struts about to show how tough he is, he usually irritates us with his need for wearing a silly mask; when Cozzens tries to show how hard-bitten and illiberal his attitudes are, he can be very convincing.

As he has written book after book, Cozzens has taken for himself the role of an irritated spokesman for the values of a snobbish and soured rationalism that approaches 19th century American Know Nothingism. Nor does the fact that he commands an extensive vocabulary and various kinds of specialized knowledge keep him from indulging in such attitudes. In American culture, on the contrary, these often go together.

SOME YEARS AGO, in the Winter 1949 *New Mexico Quarterly,* Stanley Edgar Hyman noted that

> . . . Cozzens is the novelist of the American white Protestant middle class, the chronicler of its doing and values, and his work represents those values so thoroughly as to make all of his books . . . exercises in making peace with the world as constituted.

Hyman then cited instances in Cozzens' novels where the cheap terms of prejudice toward Negroes, Jews and foreigners were used either with tacit approval or taunting ambiguity. Here, for example, is old Doc Bull, the hero of *The Last Adam*:

> Time was when Sansbury was a white man's town. Look at the Roman convent there. . . . What the hell are these monks and priors and novenas of the Little Flower doing in New England? Same with a lot of Jew artists, like Lincoln over in the Cobb place. . . . Early American house! Why doesn't he go restore himself a synagogue in Jerusalem?

Reading that last line, one suddenly notices that these are the very accents of Jason Compson in *The Sound and the Fury,* but with this crucial difference: Jason is the villain while Doc Bull is the hero, Faulkner's contempt for Jason is unmistakable while Cozzens admires Doc Bull as the embodiment (strong as a bull) of the vitality of the human race.

STILL, does Doc Bull (also a bull-thrower) really speak for Cozzens? I doubt that Cozzens finally shares his sentiments, or shares them at more than the level of mind where his main concern is to taunt "sentimental liberals" — though it had better be noted that such remarks are repeated by the "positive" characters in several of Cozzens' novels and that in *By Love Possessed* the hero, Arthur Winner, reflects upon a Jew lawyer from New York in these terms:

> Was something there of the patient shrug, something of the bated breath and whispering humbleness? . . . Did you forget at your peril the ancient grudge that might be fed if Mr. Woolf could catch you once upon the hip?

A lovely allegory—the Christian Winner and the Jewish Woolf!

But despite such passages, I think it would be a mistake to charge Cozzens with the garden variety of prejudice. It would also be letting him off a bit too easily. For something more complex is at work in his novels, something that, in the name of his need always to be hard-headed and never to be "taken in" by the illusions of ordinary men, makes him cultivate a stance of the wilfully bigoted spirit—a stance for which one cannot even claim the spontaneity of genuine prejudice. It is all part of a literary pose, Cozzens' desire to regard himself as an advocate of outspoken, uppity, no-nonsense, tough-spirited and crotchety skepticism of mind. In American folklore this is usually associated with New England, but in Cozzens' reduced version it is really much closer to the village philosophizing, the cracker-barrel wisdom that has played so sorry a part in American literature.

II

By Love Possessed is a desperately ambitious book, an effort — one last throw of the dice against the cruelty of neglect—to create a *summa* of craft and wisdom. And as usually happens when a writer decides to compose a masterpiece, it succeeds mainly in magnifying his deficiencies.

For a book that is so ambitious, *By Love Possessed* is also remarkably uninventive, almost to the point of self-mimicry. In its central situation and thematic development, it is little more than an inflated reworking of *Men and Brethren,* with the difference that the priest of the earlier novel is replaced by a lay confessor, Arthur Winner, the lawyer who sustains the weak and suffers their aggression. Given both the drift and limitations of Cozzens' mind, this substitution is hardly to be regretted.

By Love Possessed reflects Cozzens' ambition in two other ways: a generous concentration upon the surface motions and mechanics of sex (not love but the "itch" possesses most of his characters), and an indulgence in large amounts of quasi-philosophical reflection that indicate a sudden interest in the later and less fortunate works of William Faulkner. I doubt that the sex is meant for sensational effect or is the main reason for the book's success, but it does seem likely that the philosophy has genuinely impressed the reviewers. We live in so anxious a moment that people seem to have a greater need for spiritual direction than for personal pleasure.

Because of the ambition that shapes it, *By Love Possessed* succumbs to a technical fault so common in recent American novels as almost to constitute a failing in national character. Straining for a "rich" inclusiveness, Cozzens tries to absorb far more material than he can handle, and at times *By Love Possessed* begins to resemble that dreary native genre: The Novel as County History. As he moves

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in upon his small town, Cozzens tells us a great deal more than we need or care to know about a large number of characters, all of whom, one can but hopefully assume, will have some effect upon the fate of Arthur Winner.

The result is a classical example of what Henry James called "the misplaced middle." Having expended more than half his space on preparatory side-panels and flashbacks that his theme does not require but toward which his ambition goads him, Cozzens then finds himself faced with a need for suddenly driving toward a melodramatic climax — otherwise, the book might *never* end. And this means, in effect, to "misplace" the middle of his book.

One repeatedly asks oneself: why is this incident here? why are we given the details about the homosexuality of the man who plays the organ at the Episcopal church? why do we need to know about the childhood of Winner's repressed secretary? or the sordid little affair of her brother? is any principle of selection, of controlled intelligence, at work here? Most readers of popular fiction never dream of asking such questions, for if they did, they would soon be reading other kinds of books. But they are questions that a critical reader is obliged to raise.

FAR from being a mere triviality of "academic criticism," this analysis leads directly to a central weakness of the novel: the characterization of Arthur Winner. It would require a figure of genuinely heroic proportions to sustain the weight of preparation that Cozzens has accumulated, a figure whose brilliant energy and mind would persuade us that all this documentary scurrying has been worth the trouble. But the joke of it is that Cozzens means Winner to be simply a decent and ordinary American, a mature and responsible citizen who can almost be defined by the absence of heroic traits.

A SADDER joke still is that Winner does not even satisfy these modest requirements. He is a mediocre figure, incapable of thinking clearly, who fails to understand the impulse to meddling that lies behind his fretful benevolence. (Though, to be fair, neither does Cozzens.) He is also, as Dwight Macdonald has remarked, something of a prig who "delights in demonstrating his superiority on small occasions." He is often given to rudeness, which Cozzens has a way of confusing with manliness. And worst of all, he is a cold fish, about whose one sexual adventure Cozzens writes, though without realizing how badly this damages the image he means us to have of Winner: "Far from coveting his neighbor's wife, he rather disliked her, found her more unattractive than not." By love possessed, indeed!

Had Cozzens really understood what he had made in Winner, it might have been possible to build a 570 page novel about him, though the tone and implication would have had to be radically different. As it is, Cozzens tries to compensate for the porousness of Winner by surrounding him with passages of reflective prose intended to give the novel philosophical body. If ever rhetoric did the work of imagination, it is in *By Love Possessed,* though mere quotation could never suggest the pretentiousness and emptiness and elephantine coyness of Cozzens as thinker. Still, here are a few examples of what Mr. John Fischer has called Cozzens' "clarity and grace":

> Ah, how wise, how sure, how right, was that genius of the language whose instinct detected in the manifold manifestings of the amative appetite (however different-seeming; however apparently opposed) the one same urgent unreason, the one same eager let's-pretend and so, wisely consented, so, for convenience covenanted, to name all with one same name! Explaining, sweet unreason excused; excusing, sweet let's pretend explained. The young heart, indentured (O wearisome conditions of humanity!) to reason, pined, starved on the bare bitter diet of thinking. One fine day, that heart (most hearts) must bolt. That heart would be off (could you blame it?) to Loveland, to feeling's feasts.

With this rich prose there is also deep wisdom:

> An irreplaceable she was, in ordinary practise, replaced with almost ludicrous ease and dispatch. When his serious object was matrimony, a man was never long in perceiving there were still good-enough fish in the sea, and plenty of them.

And strong feeling:

> Deaf as yesterday to all representations of right, he purposed further perfidy, once more pawning his honor to obtain his lust. Deaf as yesterday to all remonstrances of reason, he purposed to sell himself over again to buy venery's disappearing dross.

And relentless realism:

> . . . there had been awkward occasions when the animal (disregarded by the hour and teased too far) reacted of a sudden, put to the shilly-shally so long imposed its own unpreventable end. Arthur Winner Junior—confusion in the moonlight: dismay among the roses! —was obliged to conceal as well as he could a crisis about which his single shamed consolation was that Hope, anything but knowing, would never know what had happened.

And a tender awareness of mortality:

> On the agreeable, admiring amusement, on the bemused tenderness, on the warmed heart, how cold a hand laid itself! The hand was doubt's, was dread's, was death's—could this be mine to keep? Ah, no; this is beyond mortal man's deserving.

And finally the distillation of profound experience, the moral of the story, spoken to Winner by his law partner:

> Boy, never try to piss up the wind. Principle must sometimes be shelved. Let us face the fact. In this life we cannot do everything we might like to do, nor have for ourselves everything we might like to have.

HERE, at last, we come to the heart of the matter: what has so won the hearts of the public and the reviewers? Surely not the sex, which can be had almost anywhere in popular fiction. Surely not the story or characterization, which are no better or worse than you might

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find in any number of unnoticed novels. Surely not the style. . . .

The answer, I think, is the implied meaning, the "philosophy," which the last quotation makes explicit but toward which the whole context of the book inexorably moves.

Cozzens is a writer who resists all optimistic and meliorist illusions about man; he will not be deceived by romantic expectations or transcendental fancies; he knows that the body is flesh in decay and love is appetite momentarily sated. He knows about the hard contingency of facts; indeed, facts are his specialty. He recognizes the fallen nature of man without succumbing to notions about redemption or grace. For he is an independent old-fashioned American, and this is a country where people understand what happens when you try to piss up the wind. It is a great economy: to reach the resolution of tragedy without having travelled the painful road of the tragic experience.

Yet it may be that there can be no tragic resolution without the preceding experience. The idea of limit—which is the one thing Cozzens permits himself to celebrate—may mean nothing without the excess of yearning to break past it. And American common-sense realism about that critter, man, may prove to be the ultimate delusion.

For our historical moment, however, the Philosophy of Limit, with its reiterated stress upon the direction of the winds, has a peculiar and powerful appeal. It speaks to a society weary of ideals and dubious of hopes; it helps console people in their prosperous frustrations; it offers conservative wisdom in a moment of liberal twilight.

And here I must disagree with Dwight Macdonald who describes *By Love Possessed* as a Novel of Resignation in which "the highest reach of enlightenment is to realize how awful the System is and yet to accept it *on its own terms.*" Macdonald confuses the impact which the book has upon readers with the meaning it conveys to them: he fails to see that the solace of resignation can be provided only by a novel that does not deal in categories of resignation.

For the audience that finds *By Love Possessed* a significant comment on the condition and problems of its life, a novel of resignation would be painful, perhaps too painful. It would have to acknowledge that there is something about about which to feel resigned, it would have to confront realities of disappointment and unfillment. *By Love Possessed,* however, creates the effect of resignation not by preaching it but by implicitly denying that there is any cause for it, not by offering apology but by providing absolution. *That is the way life goes and, man being what he is, that is the way it must go*—such is the message which the novel brings to the suburban reader who, amid the floating malaise of his or her life, hangs to the pattern of Arthur Winner's "responsibility." Such is the lesson it brings to the middlebrow reviewer who, like Arthur Winner, has also learned something about the frustration of the will among benefits of prosperity. And that is why Clifton Fadiman praises the "maturity" of *By Love Possessed*: he too has been acquainted with the winds.

But let it be said for Mr. Cozzens that he has not tried to adapt himself to the mood of the moment, he has not favored the *Zeitgeist,* he continues to say today what he had been saying for years. It is the weary *Zeitgeist* that has finally limped round to him. And, indeed, a civilization that finds its symbolic embodiment in Dwight David Eisenhower and its practical guide in John Foster Dulles has been well prepared for receiving the fruits of the Philosophy of Limit. It is a civilization that, in its naked and graceless undelusion, deserves as its laureate James Gould Cozzens—Novelist of the Republic!

Rome at Year's End; More Scandalo

THE *scandalo,* the grand *burrasca* over Maria Meneghini Callas, on this first Sunday morning of January, appears to have had the happy ending, or at least the *clamoroso successo*, that all good melodramas ought to have. A hefty young soprano, Anita Cerquetti, competent, fresh, fat, Italian, good natured and therefore, as the *Messagero* put it, "classical," imported in a hurry from Naples, sang the great role from beginning to end without a wobble. Her performance was *"liscia come il piu puro olio d'olivo."* Cries of *"Viva l'Italia"* and *"Viva le voci italiane!"* were heard.

A fine *scandalo* it has been, of the purest classical line, bottomless in its ambiguities and innuendos, rich in such types as the Outraged Friend (Elsa Maxwell), the Pathetic Husband (Meneghini), the Insulted Ruler (Gronchi), the *populo arrabbiato* (SPQR).

The Callas rhubarb was wholesomely reportable by the whole Italian press which normally—with the brilliant exception of *Espresso,* Rome's splendid "liberal" weekly—prefers to ignore Italy's real scandals altogether. Callas being somewhat Greek and at least a third American (the centrist *Messagero* politely refers to her as "the Milanese singer"), the Communist papers naturally gave her the biggest play. Why, asks *Paese Sera,* did she choose a hotel with an underground passage joining it to the Opera House if she didn't expect to flee? Did she *really* make the humble little speech of apology in her dressing room after the first act, which only *some* papers reported? Was she seen to smile as the curtain went down, and did she then imperiously declare, *"La Norma termina qui!"?* Did Callas, as Meneghini declares, go to bed at one on New Year's Eve, or did she actually, as others claim, stay up all night carrousing in the hotel? Did Meneghini really clarify matters by saying that Rome has a worse climate than Milan, that Callas' health degenerated the moment she set foot in the city? And so on, for two days and many feverish pages of newsprint.

Of Elsa Maxwell's incredibly poor behavior better to say nothing. For two days, until the arrival of the wholesome Cerquetti, the ghosts of Agrippina, Messalina and Lucrezia Borgia stalked their ancient domain. Italy has, or thinks it has, good reason for keeping *la donna furibonda* under control. But more than that, Rome, though well aware of the absurd disparity of status between the busty, dumb *dive* of the movies and the underpaid, overworked true *dive* of the opera, was outraged in its tenderest part —its sense of form.

The real scandal of the season, however, is something you will not read about in *Newsweek.* On December 23, Arrigo Benedetti, the intelligent and courageous editor of *Espresso*, was sentenced by Rome's Court of Appeal to

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seven months in jail and a fine of 70,000 lire, for defamation of the Immobiliare, Rome's powerful building combine. Benedetti may still appeal and possibly may benefit from his semi-martyrdom. Already 400 leading Italian intellectuals of all parties have signed a protest in his favor. His editorial in *Espresso* of January 5—*"Capitale Corrotta e Nazione Infetta"*—is as clear and powerful an indictment of the post-war atmosphere in government and press as one is likely to read. His subtitle:

> An appeal to the newspaper directors: we have inherited from Fascism a press which has lost its sense of its true responsibility, and we run the risk of leaving to our sons a press which will have voluntarily renounced the freedom which the Italians reconquered after so much catastrophe and bloodshed.

The issue is two-sided: the Immobiliare itself, with its reckless speculation in land, its enormous political influence and its indifference to the general welfare—and the press' response to the situation. Building speculation, as Benedetti admits, is as old as the country and linked with the whole thorny problem, so acute in crowded Italy, of hereditary titles. Fascism did little but turn the abuses of this situation to its own advantage.

Benedetti's crime was roughly this. Two years ago, the *Espresso* decided to publish a series of studies of the mayors of various Italian cities. Intending at first to be only mildly ironic, when they came to Rome they found they couldn't any longer "rest at the limits of the classical profile" and, more or less "seized by the hair," they found themselves deep in an embarrassing mess, forced to publish the results of several incriminating studies already made of the relations between the Immobilaire and the Commune of Rome.

The resulting scandal was so serious that *Espresso* bent over backwards to avoid melodrama and stick to the facts. The paper was indicted for slander and, as Benedetti writes:

> For thirty days we read in the eyes of the judges and the Public Ministry the deep anxiety of those who are made to face an ambiguous and deceptive reality. At times we seemed (and perhaps they also seemed to themselves) to be assisting at the celebration of one of those trials of provincial Italy in which the phantom of *omertà* becomes obsessive.

(*Omertà* is an untranslatable word which means roughly, in all its Mediterranean associations, underground collusion and tribal loyalty, a word much heard during the Montesi affair.) 1957, instead of a house-cleaning by the government, saw instead an almost total silence of the newspapers on the whole business.

FINALLY, in late 1957, came the scandalous sale to the Immobiliare of the grounds of the Villa Chigi, by a twenty-one year old prince under the pressure of "advisors," for the building of *palazzine di lusso*. Rome already, according to *Espresso,* has only one metre of parkland per inhabitant, as against 100 per inhabitant in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Washington and St. Paul, 40 in London, 30 in Amsterdam. Having saturated the market for middle-income houses, the Immobiliare is now acting as agent for the *grandi ricchi*. In 1948 the Counts Leopardi sold their villa on the Via Nomentana to be two-thirds covered with *villini* and *palazzine*. On August 14, 1953, the Minister of Public Instruction decreed that no more building was to be done on this beautiful parkland. But the urban assessor, disregarding this decree, issued more licenses for building. The Minister protested. No answer. Finally, in a letter of March 3, 1954, the Minister gave in and allowed the Commune to build on the remaining land. The Leopardi case is still hanging fire, but the sale of the Chigi park, after a farcical session of the Roman Commune of December 4 of last year, during which all the others left the room whenever a Socialist or Communist got up to speak, now threatens all of Rome's remaining private parklands.

This is by no means a question of parkland alone. A short walk in Rome down the hill from prosperous Parioli takes one into a pitiful sprawl of Hooverville tenements with corrugated iron roofs and squalid surroundings. People live in hillside caves across the Tiber and crowd under the arches of old aqueducts. The older quarters of the city decay under the government's impassive nose.

Why is the public so apathetic? Benedetti explains:

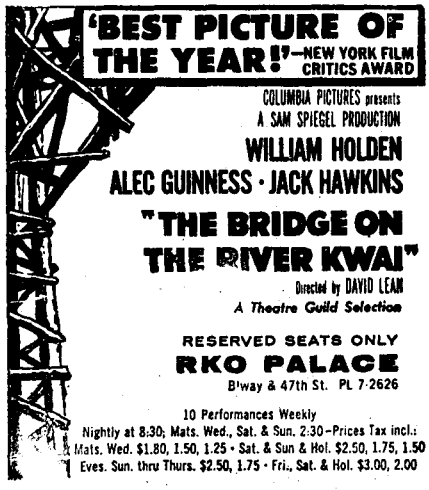
> The government (coalition or not makes no difference), with the cunning natural to bodies spiritually inert, has allowed the big interests *(padronato)* to gain an influence in newspaper policy which it has never had before. . . .

After the coercion of Fascism and the nomination of directors by Mussolini

> . . . the Demochristian party disregarded the essence of the problem of the freedom of the press; namely that, in the first place, the old proprietors, even those who could be considered partly responsible for Fascism, should have been able to exercise, without delay, a power they had already shown themselves unfit to exert; then, that these proprietors should have joined forces among themselves. The government will always provide sufficient means, by fiscal extortion and the play of favoritism, to obtain what these men want; yesterday it provided them with support of the quadripartite formula (Demo-Christians, Republicans, Social-democrats and Liberals—RF), today it sees that nobody protests against the bishop of Prato, tomorrow, who knows?

So much for scandals, real and ephemeral. Benedetti deserves all the help and sympathy American liberals can spare him; without his *Espresso* Italian life today would be an eerie conspiracy of silence.

R. W. FLINT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Notes on Contributors

With this issue, IRVING HOWE joins *NR* as a contributing editor. A member of the faculty of Brandeis University, Mr. Howe is the author of several books of criticism—most recently *Politics and the Novel*. R. W. STALLMAN, a young American poet, is co-author of the *Creative Reader*. R. W. FLINT is in Italy on a Fulbright fellowship. ROBERT FULFORD was formerly television critic of the Toronto *Sunday Telegram*.

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MOVIES

Adultery as a Moral Act

Wild is the Wind, the story of an Italian woman who is flown to Nevada to marry an Italian-American sheep farmer, is a sharp, sensible drama about the clanging and clashing that occurs when a husband fails to understand the spirit of his wife and sets about to tampering with her image of herself. At first the Italian woman (Anna Magnani) is tampered with as any immigrant would be: she must learn the language. Though this confuses and frustrates her it rather charms the husband and, I should add, the audience too. When she eventually lashes out at her husband it is because he tampers with what is larger than her Italianness — her humanity, her femininity.

Wild is the Wind (Paramount).

The sheep farmer, who is played splendidly by Anthony Quinn, has decided beforehand what his wife is to be, and that, simply, is a replica of his first wife. Not only is his idea of a spouse limited by his recollection of his first wife, but it is limited by his own ambition, his dullness, and even his financial success. For instance, in one of the film's many lively scenes we see Miss Magnani angrily washing the kitchen floor; she is angry not because she *has* to wash the floor, but rather because her husband would deny her the right to wash it. He has not worked all his life, he shouts, to see his wife a slave. She, however, finds she cannot be a woman if she has to sit around all day doing nothing but being a wife. So the images clash and clash until, finally, she comes to love a young man who works on the farm and who is apparently willing to allow her to be herself.

This kind of triangle—old husband, hearty wife, and young man—is by no means new; what gives *Wild is the Wind* its own originality is that it rises above the psychological clichés that the situation immediately suggests. The woman in this case does not turn to the young man because her old husband cannot satisfy her sexual appetite. On the contrary, the old husband is a strong, virile man whose trouble is that he satisfies *only* her sexual appetite; he recognizes and, sporadically, succumbs to only that part of her femininity. The woman, on the other hand, is willing to complement her husband, but only by the vigor of her independence — her idea of *togetherness* has to do with gracing her husband's bed and washing his kitchen floor. The woman does not come to the young man, as the title of the film would indicate, out of wildness; she comes to recollect her identity—she seeks herself, and for her adultery is made to seem a moral act.

THE morality of her action is considerably weakened by the picture we are given of the young man. Anthony Franciosa, who acted so competently in *Face in the Crowd* and *Hatful of Rain*, creates a character much too boyish, too stumbling to fit into this angle. It is hard to see in him the man the woman demands.

Whatever mix-up there may be about her deepest motives, the character that Miss Magnani brings to the screen is refreshing: a woman joyous, excitable, loving, vengeful, who is not cute, naughty, cuddley, and simpering; a woman whose sexuality is not simply in her breasts and thighs. If there is anything to be suspicious of it is not the image but the film's wholehearted belief in it. In recoiling from the image of the *McCall's* wife who can't buy a roll of ScotTissue without dragging her three children and companion-helper-husband along to help select the color, the picture seems to yield a bit too easily to a belief in the European woman who *feels* life deep deep deep.

Now the trouble is not in Miss Magnani's performance. Despite what the ads would lead you to expect she is neither flamboyant nor extravagant and she does not stoop to propagandizing her sensitivity. Rather the brilliance of her talent is in her control: personality is revealed through a subtle and pervasive verbal and physical attitude, pathos is limited by comedy, passion bounded by irony. No, it is not Miss Magnani who glorifies herself; it is the film which so embraces the European image that it will not let itself judge the character, refuses really to humble her when humbling might be in order. At the end of *Wild is the Wind*, for instance, the young man who has become the lover runs away, and the husband throws his wife out of his house. When she leaves, however, he mopes and broods and finally follows after her to seek forgiveness for his crime, the refusal to allow her to be herself. And too he forgives her of her crime, for he has suffered an education and been forced to suspend his ethic in the name of love. This is all fine and convincing; what is not so fine is that the woman seems so willing to forgive herself too, as if, in fact, she has forgotten her crime. It is interesting to contemplate whether the movie-makers really intended to let Miss Magnani off this easily, or if the rarity of her passion, the un-Hollywoodness of her vitality, charmed them into an unwitting suspension of moral fervor.

PHILIP ROTH

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TELEVISION

Three Faces of Jazz

TELEVISION'S two recent attempts to present a broad view of jazz in all its incredible diversity should prove instructive to both TV producers and jazzmen. Two one-hour programs—The Sound of Jazz, in the Seven Lively Arts series on CBS, and a one-shot Jazz Festival, sponsored on NBC by Timex—demonstrated neatly what is magnificent and what is appalling in these two young and sometimes feeble art forms.

The Seven Lively Arts presented its subject with ingratiating modesty. Whitney Balliett and Nat Hantoff, two shrewd young jazz critics, gathered together a score or so of the best jazzmen, and Robert Harridge, the producer, put them and their music together in a cohesive, excellent program. John Crosby, the literally breathless moderator of this series, offered a brief commentary, and the only other words were provided by the musicians themselves. Before the show they put on tape a few comments on jazz, and these were played back just before they began to work.

The program dispensed entirely with formality—some of the musicians even wore their hats, and no one seemed to have dressed for the occasion. At the same time, TV cameras picked up other TV cameras, electronic cables could be seen strewn about the floor, and technicians sometimes drifted aimlessly through the background. Yet the informality never seemed studied.

The camera work and the cutting in the control room were handled with a sure efficiency and a crisp sense of timing that even now are rare in television. The close-ups were used sensitively — and the picture composition was often stunning.

Count Basie's band (augmented by soloists like Gerry Mulligan and Lester Young) played superbly, a small Dixieland group with Peewee Russell was better than adequate, and a trio led by the pianist Thelonius Monk was wonderfully effective in its shy, economic way. Since the program placed emphasis on the blues side of jazz, two singers, Billie Holiday and Jimmy Rushing, were given special attention.

When it ended, The Sound of Jazz had shown how marvelously well television can handle a relaxed, casual subject—how, indeed, it can raise itself to the level of an independent art form with the use of live camera work and improvised editing. At the same time, it had conveyed the direct, immediate feeling of the best jazz—the hard, honest emotional but unsentimental impact of a great blues singer like Miss Holiday or a fine trombonist like Vic Dickenson. This was not as good as hearing these same people in a night club: it was better. And for television, presenting artists better than they are presented in their normal situation is rare accomplishment.

ON THE OTHER HAND, the Timex festival approached its subject with anything but modesty. It aimed for a big, flamboyant effect, and it conveyed almost nothing. Lawrence White, the producer, used a big hall, built large, clumsy sets, brought in an audience composed mainly of adolescents, and took on far too many musicians. (Where CBS used one big band, two singers and three small groups, NBC used two big bands, three singers, and four groups.)

"It's because of giants like these jazzmen that jazz has grown so big," said Steve Allen. But all those giants made the stage too crowded, and sometimes they were the wrong giants. Woody Herman's band, for instance, and Herman himself, were too big in their impact for television, and they were spread absurdly over two or three levels of the stage. Louis Armstrong has indeed been a giant, but in recent years much of his activity has seemed directed toward making a reputation as the last of the minstrel men. (In this concert he sang a popular song, "Blueberry Hill," and even went so far as to introduce the commercials as song.) Charlie Ventura, a tenor saxophone player whose stature has never been gigantic, played shamelessly to the crowd. Carmen McRae, a singer, chose an entirely inappropriate song and showed by her use of gesture that she is far from suited for television. Dave Brubeck's group looked self-conscious about the whole thing, particularly when they found themselves included in the ridiculous jam session at the end, when the musicians played worse collectively than they had played individually earlier in the show.

What came across, after the last musician had stopped playing out of tune and Steve Allen had shown his irritation with a delay for the last time, was the dark side of jazz—its unfortunate vulnerability to commercialism, its noisy audiences, its careless preparation. Simultaneously, TV was busy showing *its* worst side: the hampering sets, the complete lack of respect for the audience ("How about a hand for the fellows at Timex for giving us TV's first sponsored all-star jazz concert?" someone shouted at one point), and the inflexibility of camera work on a traditional theatre stage. Worse than that, it showed television's terrible, destroying tendency to borrow from other media. In this case, TV took the form of the crowded, overloaded jazz concert at which "names" are plentiful and good jazz rare. Where the Seven Lively Arts invented its own form, the Jazz Festival borrowed a bad one.

A THIRD VIEW of jazz was provided recently by Camera Three, the CBS experimental show seen at the uncomfortable hour of 11:30 Sunday morning. Camera Three took the blues as its subject, and invited Barry Ulanov, an eminent jazz critic and English professor, to explain them. Ulanov and the producer combined their necessity to explain with their desire to create, and the unified results were effective.

They used the Tony Scott quartet, a straight blues singer named Julia Steele, the folk-singer Dylan Todd, two actors, some blues-influenced poetry by W. H. Auden, e. e. cummings, and others, and a railway-station setting. Like so many of Camera Three's essays, this seemed pretentious at the beginning but was deeply convincing at the end.

Ulanov explained that the blues to him mean "An attitude to life—a way of looking at things." Actors marched on chanting poetry (Wallace Stevens: "The only emperor is the emperor of ice cream") between blues songs, a train whistled by, lights flickered over the musicians, and a hard, clear clarinet wailed an improvised blues. It sounds a little ridiculous, but in its way this odd combination was one of the best TV shows I've seen in quite a while.

ROBERT J. FULFORD

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Correspondence

(Continued from page 3)

Acheson—and who ever heard of those people, anyway?—you are finally redeemed with this entirely common sense analysis by the world-renowned authority on Indonesia.

Mr. Higgins is, to my knowledge, the only statesman of note who shows acquaintance with the fact, so familar to every mother, that the easiest way to end Junior's tantrum over not being allowed to have chocolate ice cream with marshmallows for breakfast is—to let him have those delicacies and be done with him. As Higgins points out with admirable lucidity,

> . . . If . . . New Guinea becomes part of Indonesia, Sukarno, together with the Communists and extreme Nationalists, will be deprived of one of his trump cards in bidding for power in Indonesia.

It must be a dense person indeed who cannot see how all the vexing problems in that area of the world could be solved amicably and speedily by following Mr. Higgins' reasoning. Dutch New Guinea is only a colonial name for West Irian; that means there is East Irian left, suffering at present from the cruel colonial regime of Australia. Think of the future Nationalist cries, "Give Us Our East Irian"—and think of how cleverly we will pull the rug from under those Nationalists by giving the area to them!

But why not apply Mr. Higgins' argument to the main issue—Russia? Surely, if "American support for the Dutch means American aid to the Communist cause in Indonesia," American occupancy of military bases all around Russia means American aid to the Communist cause in the whole world. Think of the diabolically clever way in which we could rob Russia of her trump cards, one by one, simply by withdrawing, one by one, our divisions and garrisons from Europe, Africa and Asia!

There will, of course, be some skeptics left of the Morgenthau-Acheson variety who will never be convinced by any forecasts, however reasonable, of future happenings. Let these people consider the following reflection about the past and be converted. Whence do all our present agonies stem? From World War II. Who started World War II? Hitler. Why did he start it? Because he wanted a tiny bit of Poland to reunite two age-old German provinces that had been rudely and wrongly separated in 1919. I venture to guess that, had Britain been fortunate enough to have Higgins as its Prime Minister in 1939, he would not have been so stupid to plunge the whole world into war over the Polish Corridor. Instead, he would have very cleverly wrested Hitler's trump card from him by letting him have that accursed piece of land.

Mr. Higgins could have saved the world then. He can do it now. Let us give him a chance before it is too late!

JOHN KEMPERS

Syracuse University

► *The Missile Experts*

SIRS:

I THINK Mr. Stehling ("The Missile Experts', *NR*, Dec. 23) is quite articulate in his presentation and that his piece is brilliantly written. While intentionally controversial, he goes directly to the heart of the matter. I agree with most of the points in his article.

WERNHER VON BRAUN

Huntsville, Alabama

► *Jimmy Porter's Temper*

SIRS:

SCHLESINGER'S thesis concerning *Look Back in Anger* ("Why is Jimmy Porter Angry," *NR*, Dec. 23) is provocative primarily because he asserts it so positively. He claims that Jimmy Porter bears the mark of a homosexual who is unrecognized . . . that our age is obsessed with homosexuality . . . that 'the hysteria, sadism and self-pity . . . and homosexual" implications of the play are responsible for its success. Of course, Prof. Schlesinger would interpret the passages in the play in which Porter is attracted to Helen, in which he implicitly boasts of his virility and in which he feels the loss of his child (admittedly, in a contorted manner) as evidence of a compensating mechanism for his homosexuality. And, this is precisely the difficulty with the Schlesinger hypothesis: any action by Porter can be interpreted within it and thus the hypothesis cannot be disproven.

The play is a complex one. Let me suggest that there is some merit, though, in the "social problem" explanation of the play that runs in terms of the alienated intellectual. What is the social prob-

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lem here? In spite of the increased status mobility in postwar England, the objective situation, the "what is," (represented by the snobbism of certain schools, the discrimination in occupations, the sanctions against hypergamy, the stuffiness of the crown, etc.) does not conform to the value orientations of certain intellectuals who were recruited from lower status positions. This "what is" is difficult to spell out; however, according to Osborne ("They Call it Cricket," *Declaration,* London, 1957) it seems to represent a situation in which values are not tied to anything which can be used in a morally meaningful manner; the crown, the church, etc. "represents . . . a substitute for values." Space precludes the quoting of Porter's speeches in which this problem was handled.

Finally, does the appeal of the other angry young men and women, John Wain, Kingsley Amis, Doris Lessing, etc., lie in their generating hysteria, sadism, self-pity and homosexuality? The "social problem" hypothesis seems to be more adequate.

MURRAY BROWN
Assistant Professor of Economics
University of Pennsylvania

". . . beside the mark"

SCHLESINGER's analysis seemed accurate enough, but the conclusion, beside the mark. I would base this statement on one point; it seems to me most unlikely that it would take *4 years* of marriage to induce self-recognition in a homosexual.

However, there is still another explanation not mentioned by Mr. Schlesinger which might illuminate the mystery "Why is Jimmy Porter angry?" His anger might be a neurotic response; he is not reasonably well adjusted to his lot in life; presumably, he is a failure (though apparently he speaks of the world as failing him). As a result of this simple situation, *i.e.,* failure, personality disturbances make their appearances. In such a case, homosexuality is a symptom, and not a cause. Medically speaking, here the homosexuality is not "essential" but circumstantial, akin to the prison variety.

In summary, and to paraphrase in a very mixed manner, "Will Failure Spoil Jimmy Porter?" No, just make him angry.

AARON LEVY, M.D.
Winsted, Conn.

► *Campus Taste in Reading*

SIRS:

I SHOULD like to know the grounds for Mr. Henry Popkin's assertion ("Bentley's Choices," *NR,* Dec. 30) that my anthologies charm and delight the campus. I do not know him to be wrong; and I have every reason to hope that he is right; but my own impression is that there is no abyss between the college and Broadway or that, if there is, their mutual pleasure is to hold hands across it. The charm and delight I myself have noticed on campuses is, in short, that of Broadway itself. In evidence, I would offer the programs of the college theatres of this country since my anthologies started appearing. Are they really any different from earlier programs? My impression (it is no more) is that the buyers of "quality paperbacks" are the professional class generally—which obviously includes teachers—but I would not include undergraduates as a class under the heading of book-buyers as I have never known more than a small minority of them to buy anything but textbooks and those only for four months. Undergraduates cannot afford books at 35 to 95 cents (though liquor at $4 to $7.50 is easier to manage). On the other hand, I would make the definition of "professional class" quite wide and include secretaries and all sorts of young ladies I see in the subways (the kind Mr. Walter Kerr calls "shopgirls"). . . .

ERIC BENTLEY
New York City

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